(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what are the names of the companies which have shown interest for privatization of telephone system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) to (c) No Sir. At present no proposal is under consideration of Govt. for privatisation of telephone system in the country. As such the question of furnishing details in this regard along with the names of the companies having shown interest in the matter does not arise. However, certain value-added services like Electronic Mail Service, Cellular Mobile Telephone Services, Paging services, Videotex, Video Conferencing, Voice Mail, Data Services (via satellite), Direct Access Code Dialling, Audiotex etc. have been opened up for private sector participation on franchise basis.

Recasting of National Telecommunication Policy

76. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Telecommunication policy is being recast and the thrust of the new policy will be on the involvement of the private sector in basic services including rural networking; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the new policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) The National Telecommunication Policy is still under consideration of the Government.

Telephone services in Delhi and other cities of the country

77. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:

SHRI ANANT RAM JAISWAL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any solid plan to control day to day rising complaints of telephone services to Telephone holders/consumers, particularly with number 198 in Delhi and also in other cities of the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what action has been taken or is likely to be taken to improve the telephone services being rendered to the consumers/telephone holders in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The clearence of faults booked on 198 is being monitored at the highest level to ensure the repair of telephones in the shortest possible time. Plans have been formulated for extending computerisation of Faults Repair Service to all major exchange centres.

Steps taken to improve the telecommunications services are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

Steps taken to improve telecommunication Services

1. Telephone Exchanges and Media:

(a) introduction of Electronic Exchanges.

(b) Introduction of Electronic Taxs

(c) Introduction of Electronic Transit exchanges.

(d) Phasing out of old and life expired electromechanical exchanges.

(e) Introduction of PCM systems, optical fibre and digital microwave system for inter exchange junctions.

(f) Introduction of AMA for electro-mechanical exchanges.

2. External Plant:

(a) Laying of underground cables in ducts.

(b) Pressurisation of paper core underground cables.

(c) Use of jelly filled PVC insulated underground cables.

(d) Use of improved terminations by introduction of terminations by insulation displacement method.

(e) Replacement of old fault prone cables.

(f) Use of insulated dropwire with proper accessories.

3. Computerisation of services:

(a) Fault Repair Service.

(b) Financial Management system including commercial and billing activities.

4. Opening of additional computerised customer service centres/Quick Customer Service Centres.

5. Increased access to telephone by opening:

(i) Additional Public Telephones for Local and STD calls on liberal basis.

(ii) Additional Telecom Centres.

6. Improved Customer Interface:

(a) Easy accessibility of officers: In a large network some customers may have their problems which have not got attended to satisfactorily. It is to resolve such problems that all field officers are available to meet the customers from 3 P.M. to 4 P.M. on all working days. The customer can also see the Area General Manager during the hours with prior appointment on all working days except Friday when they are available between 10.00 to 13.00 hours without any prior appointment.

(b) Conduction of Open House Sessions/Customer's meet:

Open house Sessions are held at different levels to apprise our customers of our development plans. This also provides a forum for interaction with customers to know their observations about service and inform customers about what all is being done by MTNL to extend satisfactory service.

(c) Conduction of Telephone Adalats: In addition telephone adalats are regularly held once in every quarter to provide on the spot redressal of grievances pertaining to service, billing, etc.

Revamping of Postal Services

78. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the recommendations made by the Social Audit Panel for revamping postal services, as reported in the Hindustan Times, dated the 17th June, 1993 under the headline: "Stress on revamping postal services";

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main recommendations of the Panel with reference to the items reported in the Hindustan Times dated 17-6-93, are indicated in the enclosed statement. *(see below)* :

(c) The recommendations of the Social Audit Panel have been discussed by the higher level management with the Social Audit Panel. While recommendations such as facelift of postal premises, modernisation of postal services, improvement of postal stationery, promotion of pincode have been accepted and are also